

Scribes, Schumann, and Soul

MAKING IT

Twenty years ago, Bob Fosse showed a dismal side of show business in the Academy Award-winning *All That Jazz*. Joseph Gideon drank, drugged, and slept his way to hallucinatory ruin, aged and died before his time. In Lauren Robert's musical drama *Making It*, Bobby Rose has some similar decisions to make. While Gideon refuses to slow down, Rose has no choice. Gideon is a star director, Rose is on the verge—and that's apparently the least of her problems. Her work has been consistently almost brilliant, but she's never made it big. In her early 40s, Bobby's choices of roles are dwindling, and so, as it turns out, is her health. Flagging energy and continual exhaustion come part and parcel with steady work in the theater, but when a former romantic partner of ten years dies of AIDS, Bobby begins to consider disease as the source of her weariness.

What is a disease? Certainly, bacterial and viral attacks on the body. What if success is a disease, or at least, wanting it too much is? Robert, known locally for fronting the jazz vocal group Mojo Hand, worked in New York for over twenty years, and her script and libretto draw upon her own experiences. In the acting world of New York, there is a general "contempt for anything less than bigger-than-life," Robert comments. "Having a taste of the life is intoxicating and so exhilarating." Success holds out a potent promise, but one without any guarantee of even a minimal payback. Robert adds, "The 'almosts' were killers."

Robert's music captures at turns this grandeur and despair, leaving behind the jazz of her singing career for the traditional musical format of Broadway.

The life-threatening nature of AIDS provides a vehicle for re-evaluation for the character of Bobby Rose. How many ways are there to judge the worth of success? What are the other means to a personally and professionally satisfying life? While Robert's work focuses on acting and the theater, the consuming idea of success permeates any career and, potentially, every life.



Lauren Robert stars in the musical drama *Making It*, which she composed, at the Waldron on April 16-17, 23-25.

Robert co-stars with the New York choreographer Robert Weber, who also directed the production.

At the Waldron Auditorium, April 16-17, 23-25. For more information, call 334-3100.

—Kurt Hartwig